(b) and (c) The Production of foodgrains in the country since independence shows a long-term upward trend, albeit with fluctuations due to variations in agro-climatic conditions. The food grains production upto the sixties grew mainly due to expansion of cultivated area. After the sixties, the growth was mainly due to accelerated rate of productivity. However, lately the cultivated area has remained more or less static, and the increase in productivity is not as significant as in the seventies and the eighties. Thus, while the overall production of foodgrains in the country still shows an upward trend, the rate of growth is not as high as it was in the earlier period.

(d) There is no proposal to distribute foodgrains free of cost. The foodgrains under special component of Sampoorna Gramin RojgarYojana (SGRY) are supplied to State Governments at free of cost but the Ministry of Rural Development re-imburses to Food Corporation of India (FCI) at economic cost. So far a quantity of 38.29 lakh tonnes of foodgrains have been allocated to 12 drought affected States.

(e) and (f) The storage capacity available with FCI in the State of Kerala as on 31st October, 2002 is 6.02 lakh metric tonnes whereas the stock of foodgrains on that date was 4.26 lakh metric tonnes. Thus, position of storage capacity is comfortable. The utilisation of existing FCI godowns in Kerala is 71%. There is still space to store more foodgrains.

Pulse and oilseeds production

3138. DR. ABRAR AHMED: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the target fixed for production of oilseeds and pulses, during the year 2001-02, has been achieved;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the various incentives being provided to farmers to motivate them to take up cultivation of these crops, on a large scale?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The production of oilseeds and pulses has fallen short of the target fixed for the year 2001-02 due to the drought conditions in the major oilseeds and pulses growing States.

(c) In order to increase the production of oilseeds and pulses two Centrally Sponsored Schemes, namely, Oilseeds Production Programme (OPP) for oilseeds and National Pulses Development Project (NPDP) for pulses are in implementation in various States/UTs in the country. Under these schemes financial assistance is provided on various inputs like production and distribution of deeds, distribution of seeds minikits, distribution of improved farm implements, sprinkler sets, rhyzobium culture, micro nutrients etc. in order to motivate the farmers to take up the cultivation of these crops on large scale.

Farmers conditions

3139. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India has emerged as an agriculture power, but most of the farmers continue to live in pathetic conditions;

(b) whether it is also a fact that though agriculture is the backbone of our economy, much more remains to be done, to improve the lot of farmers;

(c) if so, the steps being taken in this regard;

(d) whether new farm pricing model and reforms in farms sector can improve that lot of farmers to certain extent; and

(e) if so, the steps proposed to be taken in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (c) As per the FAO Production Year Book, 2000, India ranks second after China in foodgrains Production in the World. India's foodgrains production increased from 50.82 million tonnes in 1950-51 to 211.32 million tonnes in 2001-02. This has enabled India to become a net exporter of foodgrains. As per the 1990-91 agricultural census, there are about 107 million operational holdings (farmers) in India. Of them, nearly 60 per cent are marginal farmers with less than 1 hectare of land, while about 19 per cent are small farmers with 1 to 2 hectares of land. About 13 per cent are in the semi-medium category with 2 to 4 hectares of land while those in the medium category with 4 to 10 hectares of land constitute about 7 per cent